

No Main Street, and no rat race

By Lisa Sumter

Press-Gazette

FLINTVILLE — Community is more of a feeling than a physical presence here.

There is no Main Street, no quaint mom-and-pop grocery store, no cheese factory, dance hall or blacksmith shop anymore in Flintville, about 13 miles northwest of Green Bay.

Developed as a logging community in the late 1840s, Flintville became a boomtown, historical records show. Suamico followed suit, though, and surpassed Flintville as a logging center.

Homes now are nestled in among the pines, a few farms and a tavern on the outskirts. The most notable landmark is the Brown County Reforestation Camp.

All this hasn't made Flintville less attractive to long-time residents and young families looking to escape the city. Patrick Vaile, Brown County's principal planner, said population in the town of Suamico, where Flintville is located, grew more than 25 percent in the last decade.

He said sandy soil in the Flintville area makes it a prime spot for home building.

The centerpiece of the community is SS. Edward and Isidore Catholic Church, 3667 Flintville Road. It has more than 2,400 members and is the center of community activities.

Card parties, exercise classes, potluck dinners, Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and prayer groups all have a home here, the Rev. David Kasperek said.

"Every night there are three or four things going on," he said. "It's a revolving door."

Flintville, a bedroom community of Green Bay, is a place where old-fashioned family structure survives amid new ideas, Kasperek said.

"While it has a segment of the community of old, it has young, new, vibrant people who want to take advantage of having a 2-acre plot with animals and everything, so when they get home from work they can get away from the rat race," he said.

Another of Flintville's drawing cards is the area's natural resources. Hunting



On the farm: Joe Kaczmarek shows a Holstein calf at his Flintville farm.



Busy place: The Rev. David Kasperek, pastor of SS. Edward and Isidore Catholic Church, sits behind the altar as he discusses the many activities that take place at the church in Flintville.

and fishing are popular and convenient. "It takes 16 minutes to get my line in the water to fish perch," Kasperek said with a grin.

Josephine Pawlak, 2943 Westview Road, reflected on her 50 years in Flintville as she dusted church pews. She said there is a friendly atmosphere and a spirit of cooperation among residents.

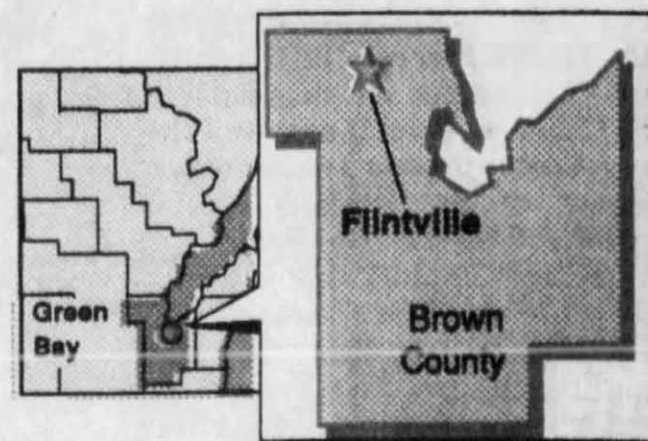
"I always said they'd have to carry me out before I'd leave," she said.

Joe and Jean Kaczmarek, 3330 Flintville Road, keep a 100-year family tradi-

tion alive on their 360-acre dairy farm. They bought the farm from Joe's grandmother in 1958 and run the 235-head operation with two sons.

The Kaczmareks have seen a nationwide farming decline mirrored in Flintville. Today it is difficult for young farmers to stay in business, and many family farms are split up among relatives, sold, or used for cash crops, Joe Kaczmarek said.

Next week: Whitefish Bay in Door County



The Flintville file

☐ **Population:** 65, as estimated by the Rev. David Kasperek.

☐ **Name that town:** Flintville is named for the Flint family, which ran one of the community's earliest lumber mills on the Suamico River from 1853 to 1861. Although the settlement was developed in the late 1840s, it was not officially named until 1871 when a post office was built there.

☐ **Nostalgia:** When a new church was built for the parish of SS. Edward and Isidore Catholic Church 18 years ago, stained-glass windows and some pews from the old building were installed. Also, the cross in the sanctuary is made of two beams from the original foundation.



Bar time: Jennifer Rose of Suamico prepares to open Wouter's Front, a tavern Rose manages in Flintville.